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vocabulary and other features he proposes to give in a second treatise. From what is given it is not easy to see that the Doctor has in any way improved on the *Lingvo Internacia* of Dr. Esperanto, which was noticed in these pages sometime ago.

In general, it may be observed that the most of the international language-makers overlook one of the most patent phenomena of modern linguistic growth; namely, the tendency to abandon synthetic for analytic modes of thought. The psychological reason for this is undoubtedly that the latter are felt to be more clear and expressive. What else will account for the Romance peoples universally breaking away from the highly complex Latin inflections? English has gone further in this respect than any other European language, and yet every one must feel that a vast gain has been made thereby. While the German script-speech still clings to many useless endings, the popular dialects long ago abandoned a large part of them. The same desire for greater simplicity and clearness manifested itself in very early times amongst the Latin dialects, as compared with the literary idiom. Modern Greek likewise, colloquial speech at least, has given up much of its earlier terminal complexity. That the advocates and promoters of the literary language have, in recent years, been striving to get back to classic Greek forms, is no argument against the general proposition that all languages are tending towards analytical modes of thought. In fact, were this the place for such a discussion, good reasons might be assigned for the belief that the great masses of the people have always had a preference for this method of thought, and that the highly inflected Sanskrit, Greek and Latin of ancient literature were merely the creations of pedants and grammarians and were spoken in their purity, if at all, only by the learned few.

The reformers, therefore, seem to have no practical reason for assuming that the world cares to go back to synthetic methods of thought. As the matter now stands, English, which has abandoned almost all its inflections, appears to have the best chance for becoming the world-speech. Nothing would prove such a powerful help in this direction as giving up

our ridiculous etymological spelling and adopting a sensible phonetic alphabet.

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#### MODERN ITALIAN READINGS.

*Modern Italian Readings in Prose and Poetry.* Edited with grammatical and explanatory notes and biographical notices by W. L. MONTAGUE, Ph.D. 8vo, pp. vii. 228, C. Schoenhof, Boston: 1893.

THE supply of suitable Italian texts for reading in elementary classes is very limited in this country. One reason for the dearth of material probably lies in the fact that those who could edit texts are deterred from doing so because they do not know what the majority of teachers want. Some instructors hold that as the class reads little, this little should be from the classics, especially from Dante, since he represents what is best in Italian literature; others feel that a class of beginners is poorly prepared to understand so philosophic a writer, and hence the small amount read would be of slight benefit to them. In undergraduate classes at the Johns Hopkins University we read only works of living authors, for the simple reason that, so far as the language is concerned, the pure prose of De Amicis or Martini fully subserves the purposes of our elementary students. When we consider the question of content, I think that recent texts are again to be preferred in the initial stages of instruction, since our acquaintance with Italian writers of to-day is far too meagre, whereas the best Italian classics represent, not a peculiarly Italian, but a world-literature, with which the student is sure to become more or less familiar without the aid of class-instruction.

To be convinced that contemporary Italian literature is worthy of earnest study, one has only to read the prose selections given in Prof. Montague's book; here are productions quite as interesting from every point of view as some of those in French for which we have so great a liking. The poetical extracts here presented do not comprise living writers, excepting Carducci and Giacosa; following in his footsteps a school has arisen, consisting of

such men as Severino Ferrari, Guido Mazzoni, Giovanni Pascoli and Marradi, who sing of the family, nature and its relations with the human soul, *la Patria*, and man (not the man of Leopardi); a pathetic note is often struck, but in the deepest grief pictured, these votaries of the muse never fail to reveal a virile courage, a patient perseverance, a hope in the future—the reader feels that it is the poetry of a man, not the vagaries of a morbid fancy.

While I should have liked to see selections from some of these authors (or from Graf and D'Annunzio who pursue different ends). I do not deprecate the absence of their names from the collection, for ample material is given in the first part of the book (comprising prose selections) to introduce a class to the study of more ambitious works, either by the writers here presented or by other authors. This First Part consists of four complete stories by De Amicis, Castelnuevo, Serao and Verga; the opening chapters of a romance by Barrili, a fascinating chapter from Villari's 'Savonarola,' and three pages from Gioberti's introduction to the study of philosophy. The Second Part contains selections from Foscolo, Niccolini, Manzoni, Leopardi, Giusti, Prati, Aleardi, Carcano, Zanella, Carducci and Giacosa. Pages 163-228 are occupied by the "Notes." An interesting feature of the latter is the short biographical sketch of each author, preceding the selection given from his works. From the nature of the book these notices had to be brief, but it seems to me that some of the authors represented might have been more clearly characterized; for example (taking four writers of prose selections), it is stated of De Amicis that he "is one of the most popular contemporary writers." This bald statement gives a student no idea of the ground of such popularity. It might have been noted that his earliest (and most successful) efforts were in drawing vivid pen pictures of military life. Under its rough exterior, De Amicis looked for and found the soldier's heart beating with some noble impulse, impelling him at times to unexpected deeds of self-abnegation, proving he is not a machine, but a human being;—of what is purest and best in this being, De Amicis' finest attempts are the apotheosis. His subjects are treated in a style that appeals

directly to the soul of the reader; in fact, the author has been accused of straining after pathos and of shallowness. Stung by such accusation, he ceased to portray character, and undertook his books of travel, which met with immediate success and have been translated into many languages. His third and last *motif* is socialism.

The notice of Enrico Castelnuevo is in the main adequate: "he has published many romances, all distinguished by profound observation, deep feeling and brilliant description." One point in regard to this author—a point illustrated by the selection given—might have been mentioned; namely, his humor, considered in Italy as "umorismo britannico"; in truth, in the reading of some of his novels, notably "Due Convinzioni," one is conscious of a resemblance to, if not an imitation of, Thackeray. The selection, "Il Teorema di Pitagora," reads admirably in English, and may be found translated on pages 191-199 of Scribner's 'Humour of Italy' (New York, 1893).

It is gratifying to note the selection from Matilde Serao, for no collection of contemporary Italian novelists would be complete without some representation from the school, remarkable in many respects, of authoresses now writing in Italy, distinguished by such names as Emma, Colombi, Mancini, Sara, Neera, Saredo and others. As De Amicis excels in his pictures of the soldier's life, and Castelnuevo for those of Venetian life, so Serao is not to be surpassed in descriptions of contemporary southern life: she is often diffuse and prolix, but the dramatic efficacy of some of her passages is wonderful. It is to be regretted that she merits, in part at least, to be assigned by Robert Buchanan, in his recent poem "The Dismal Throng," to a place with Zola, Tolstoi, Ibsen and de Maupassant.

As to Barrili I think it is questionable whether "his numerous works are characterized by much vigor and brilliancy; they win attention and move the heart." The reading of his works does not impress me in this way; they seem rather harmless, peaceful productions, which one reads without curiosity, without deep feeling, without smiles or tears,—

an effective preparation for tranquil dreams. Barrili serves up a *romanzo* out of material not too abundant for a simple *novella*, introducing numerous characters that have nothing to do with the main theme. He lacks the effective pathos of De Amicis, the penetrating humor of Castelnovo, the descriptive powers of Serao.

But while one may thus take exception to the treatment, here and there, of the various authors presented in the collection before us, as a whole these short biographies are excellent, and form an attractive feature of the book. The compilation of facts as to Italian versification (pages 192-195) comprises the essentials, and it is easy for the student to learn them, since repeated references to them are made in the course of the notes.

My remarks up to this point have been in the main commendatory, but I cannot speak so favorably of the "explanatory notes," though this may be said in their favor, that they contain useful references to the grammar of the editor, and also to that of Prof. Grandgent; otherwise they do not comprise what I should look for in notes to selections of the kind presented, and what a class of beginners, which used the book, missed. "Explanatory" notes should elucidate difficulties not explained in the dictionaries ordinarily consulted by students. To use with profit a book in which the selections contain so many idiomatic expressions and local references, the teacher who has a practical command of the contemporary language and literature and has traveled over Italy, may easily supply all omissions of explanations of idioms and literary and local references; but this reader is not made for such a teacher, as he needs no notes and will probably make his own selections of readings for his pupils. The collection is intended for beginners, and the notes should, therefore, have been adapted to the needs of such readers. My point will be clearly understood by calling attention to what I consider some of the omissions of the kind to which reference has been made.

P. 1, l. 8: the use of *proprio*.—P. 2, l. 18: the use of the conditional in: "si dava per certo che i soldati *avrebbero* passato il confine"—where the conditional tense corresponds to the English past. In like manner

the use of the future for the present in constructions such as, "suppongo che [tu] *sarai* il primo" (p. 31), might have been commented on.—P. 6, l. 12: *venite più in qua*.—P. 10, l. 8: "si dice che siano *seguite* delle disgrazie."—P. 21, l. 19: "il vecchio, ferito nel sentimento che lo esaltava, *perdetto*, com'era solito, *i lumi*."—P. 27, l. 3: *fiasco*, equivalent to the English slang "flunked"; a more common word for the same idea is *schacciato*.—P. 27, l. 8: "che quesito *l'era toccato*?"—P. 28, l. 13: "facevo un *discreto* profitto."—P. 29, l. 21: sense of *fare* in such locutions as, "*far* il gradasso."—P. 34: the note to *poetini elzeviriani* reads, "after the manner of the printers named Elzevir." I do not think this explains entirely the allusion Serao evidently intends to make. The term "elzeviriani" is applied with something of a contemptuous sense by critics in Italy, to poets who publish their worthless productions in the beautiful form of an Elzevir edition. It is for this reason that Serao uses the diminutive *poetini*, which is very suggestive here, instead of *poeti*.—P. 36, l. 6: the phrase: "quando sull'orizzonte si profila l'ardito pensiero di Michelangelo" is not made any clearer by the simple note: "Michelangelo, celebrated as a painter, sculptor and architect, designed the dome of St. Peter's, at Rome." The phrase referred to occurs in a description of Florence, and the "ardito pensiero" of Michelangelo, which may be seen on the horizon, evidently refers to his statue of David, which is placed in the *piazza* of the *Viale dei Colli*, the beautiful promenade constructed on the hills outside of, but visible from, Florence.—P. 34, l. 9: *viaggi circolari*.—P. 35, l. 2: the many uses of *roba* might have been commented on.—P. 35, l. 11: the explanation of the form *gran*, in "una gran bella città" (to be found in Grandgent's grammar, 3d ed., p. 19, foot-note) should have been referred to.—P. 36, l. 2: the way Italians designate centuries, as illustrated here by *il trecento*, meaning the fourteenth century.

The value of the "notes" might have been enhanced, I venture to think, by the introduction of more explanations like those just suggested. Otherwise, I have only praise for the book as it answers a want long felt by teachers of Italian in this country; it is worthy of a place, and I am sure will readily find one,

among those works to be recommended for classes in elementary Italian.

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### GERMAN LITERATURE.

*Hartmann von Aue. Iwein der Ritter mit dem Löwen.* Herausgegeben von EMIL HENRICI. ('Germanistische Handbibliothek,' viii, viii 2.) Erster Teil: Text. Zweiter Teil: Anmerkungen. Halle: 1891-1893. 8vo, pp. xxxix, 526.

HARTMANN'S 'Iwein,' traditionally the M.H.G. classic, has naturally long formed the main centre of the study of the Court-Epic. Lachmann's editions, Benecke's 'Wörterbuch,' and many separate essays and studies, have provided a very complete critical apparatus, more complete than that of any other M.H.G. monument, with the exception, possibly, of Walther von der Vogelweide and the 'Nibelungenlied.' Henrici's new edition, now complete, increases this material considerably, and to a still greater degree facilitates its use. While it cannot be considered final—the time for that has not yet come—it marks a great step in advance, and will give a new impulse to the study of 'Iwein.'

As especial features of the book may be enumerated: 1. Scrupulously detailed marginal references to the corresponding lines of Chrestien (ed. Foerster). 2. Variations from L<sup>1</sup> and L<sup>2</sup> cited below the text. 3. MS. readings, complete to all intents and purposes, placed where they belong, at the bottom of the page. 4. Parallel passages from other M.H.G. works, below the annotations in the second part, showing equally good judgment. 5. 'Namenverzeichnis,' giving MS. variants.

The text is constituted quite independently of Lachmann. The latter's metrical canons are entirely disregarded in so far as text-emendation is concerned. The editor defines his position in the following words:

"Von einer wechselbeziehung zwischen wortform und metrik, einer gestaltung der sprachform nach dem von der metrik gewonnenen bilde (Roediger, S. 82) erwarte ich nichts" (p. xxxvi, footnote).

For the present time this is, from a practical

point of view, doubtlessly correct, but still it seems questionable whether it can be stated in such a general way. In fact, as a matter of principle it hardly seems tenable in just this form. Scientists do this same thing every day. So when we obtain rules of phonetic change from word-equations, and refuse to recognize kinship where these rules are apparently not observed—no matter how closely related the meaning—, the principle is the same as that rejected by Henrici. Fairly stated, it is merely a question of numbers. If there are ten cases of strict observance over against one of apparent non-observance, we may possibly refuse to accept the latter as evidence against our rule, and conclude that the two words are not akin. In principle the two methods are the same. It is true, however, that in results the other procedure, text-emendation from metrical canons, is by far the more dangerous: it interferes with the material, obscures evidence, often for years to come. Hence the tenacity with which Lachmann's theories have for decades clung to the science. In comparative grammar, to follow up the analogy, there is no such danger: judgments may be corrected, without prejudice, at any time: a starred form carries its own danger signal. Hence the value of conservatism in textual criticism in general. And in justice to Henrici it should be said that he has been as chary of admitting his own suggestions and aperçus into the text, as he has been sceptical towards Lachmann's restorations.

Pp. xvi-xxix of the Introduction contain an investigation into the MS. relationship, the vexed question treated by Paul in vol. i of the *Beiträge*, and, more recently, by Böhme, *Germania*, xxxv. Henrici's conclusions are:

"dass von den einzelverhältnissen, welche Paul und Böhme bemerkt haben, manche festzuhalten sind; die stammbäume haben sich dagegen nicht bewährt."

Not having succeeded in constructing a new "stammbaum" himself, he concludes (p. xxxii):

"... ebenso berechtigt ist der gedanke, dass hier eine andere redaction von des dichters eigener hand zu tage trete und dass es mehrere echte Iweine gab. Mit dieser vermuthung würden sich sämtliche widersprüche . . . ohne mühe lösen lassen: die untersuch-